

ANNIE RUSSELL Will Appear at the Olympic To-Morrow Evening in "Brother Jacques," a New Comedy From the French—"Prince of Pilsen" Returns to the Century To-Night—"Royal Chef" at the Garrick.



STELLA TRACY AS RENE THE LONDON MUSIC HALL SINGER IN "THE ROYAL CHEF" AT THE GARRICK

AN IMPRESSION OF ANNIE RUSSELL WHO COMES TO THE OLYMPIC IN "BROTHER JACQUES"

THE WEEK'S PLAY BILL.
 Olympic—Annie Russell in "Brother Jacques."
 Century—"The Prince of Pilsen."
 Garrick—"The Royal Chef."
 Odessa—"All the Comforts of Home."
 Grand Opera-house—Florence Bloddy in "The Street Singer."
 Imperial—Lottie Williams in "Only a Shop Girl."
 Hastings—"From Rags to Riches."
 Columbia—Eddie Girard and Vaudeville.
 Crawford—William Russell in "An American Gentleman."
 Standard—Burlesque.

Several weeks ago I took the liberty of suggesting that Eleanor Robson was one of the obvious newcomers in the world theatre. I beg now to add the name of Stella Tracy.

Long before the arrival of Miss Robson and Miss Loftus we had with us Miss Tracy. She is a young woman of about the third magnitude. Now, suddenly, she bursts upon us in new brilliancy. She is an actress of importance, a comedienne of rare qualities, a personality that will remain with us with good luck for not less than ten years. For that is the period in which she will retain the girlish charm that is now a part of her equipment.

"The Serio-comic Goddess" is a thing that might not come from anyone but Zangwill or Shaw, the result being that much of the Tracy first Century method slips out over the heads of the audience to Jimmy Hannebery, who stands in constant interest at the rear of the theater.

But Miss Tracy, her smile, her general cleverness and her youthful charm, aided by the admirable Mr. Reeves-Smith, Miss Dean and Miss Vincent, save this piece and make it more than worth while.

Mr. Robert Lawrence Giffen is the Lotus manager this season. Time was when Mr. Giffen was the manager of the Grand Opera-house stock, where he made a record for stock excellence in St. Louis. Mr. Giffen is one of a dozen American theatrical directors who know what he is talking about all of the time, and who talks it in English that will stand the grammatical test.

He was once a railroad man, but since he has been in the "show business" he has added a touch of managerial goodness to all of the enterprises with which he has connection.

Just now he is a valued attaché of the Daniel Frohman forces. It is not surprising that Mr. Giffen endorses the expression in these columns of last Sunday in relation to the St. Louis opportunity as a field for the revival of the good old opera stock idea.

"Let a manager start right," said Mr. Giffen, "and he will enjoy the dignity and the dollars of a notable season. St. Louis is known the country over as an appreciative center for the best in grand opera. But everything must be first class. An impresario should engage singers like, say, Joseph Shochan and Adolphe Norwood. Then let him give the public smart productions of the grand old classics, whose music is ever a delight. Patrons would immediately rush to his support in droves, Germany and Austria have given the world the greatest operas. German opera was alone would make the musical venture a go in St. Louis. Provided, of course, that the right sort of pieces were rightly put forward."

Mr. Giffen has directed stock companies in the East and in the South since he was in St. Louis. He also found time to direct James K. Hackett's four one-act dramas of the lower provinces of Canada. Just now he is predicting a great career for Stella Tracy. He is firm in the belief that she will be the Rejane of America in the very near future.

One of the big successes of several seasons is to come to the Century with the return of "The Prince of Pilsen." Nothing that Mr. Short and Mr. Hannebery have offered in the comic-opera field has had so much continuous success here as this amusing thing. Over at the Olympic Mr. Short will re-introduce Miss Annie Russell in a new play, to be followed a week later by Mr. Otis Skinner in a drama of the lower provinces of Canada. Altogether, we are to have much of pleasing interest in the immediate playhouse future.

The natural and expected thing has happened.

"The Royal Chef" will continue indefinitely at the Garrick. The first two weeks came to a close last night.

Three matinees were given last week, all needed to take care of the huge audiences that yearn to see this queer bodgedodge of fun and music.

I said last Sunday that there may be truth in the intimation that there is little that is new in "The Royal Chef," but the thing is put together so ingeniously, the rag-time element is so well advanced, the costumes so colorful, the girls so pretty, and the general effect so pleasing, that the people want to see it.

There isn't much art in "The Royal Chef," and there is much that is as old as the seven hills upon which Rome is reported to have found herself; but the thing

is what our humble servants, the people, want—and there you are!

I am informed, by the way, that Mr. David Lewis, who is the Royal Chef himself, means to go into Shakespeare and present one of the two funny dramas, who are best known in these United States because of three productions in twenty years by the late Stuart Robson. If Mr. Lewis can get another drama who is as funny as he ought to be, Shakespearean comedy will have a suitable revival.

Franz Von Vecsey, the prodigy violinist, who will shortly make his appearance in St. Louis, if arrangements can be made with the Odessa management, is having receptions at Carnegie Hall that amount to ovations.

The youngster is only 12 years old and is accompanied here by his mother and his musical director, Herr Alexander Gross. He has played before nearly all the crowned heads of Europe and has tokens of esteem from all. Mrs. Von Vecsey is her boy's constant companion. Seated in an easy chair in their apartments at the Netherlands in New York, the other day, Mrs. Von Vecsey with pride exhibited a number of the trinkets which have been given him.

"That was his grandfather's watch and chain," said Mrs. Von Vecsey, "and he thinks a great deal of it. He has seven really good watches, but you could not persuade him to substitute one of them for that old-fashioned silver timepiece he carries. He sleeps with it under his pillow. The jeweled gold watch and chain presented to him by the Czar and Czarina of Russia, was too valuable to bring with us on our travels. We left it at home. But here is a beautiful little watch presented to Frank by the Grand Duchess Constantine of Russia. The chain attached to it was given to him by Queen Alexandra of England. She wore it herself when a child. I thought Frank might like that big silver affair and wear this small watch. He did for a few days. But one morning he handed it back to me and demanded his old love. He gave no reason. It is one of his many peculiar traits never to give a reason for anything he does, and so long as he never does anything out of reason we humor him."

The strong look of the little violinist is a wonder in itself. Surely no boy of his small size, who did for a few days, ever possessed such genius. There were watches, pearl pins, buckles, sleeve buttons, studs and almost everything else that a boy or man would ever be likely to wear in the way of jewels as well as medals and decorations from different orders. The Kaiser's scarf pin was a horseshoe of diamonds and rubies, surrounded by a comet, the Czar's, a star of amethysts and brilliant; King Edward's a laurel wreath of diamonds. From the King of Saxony and minor potentates, and from titled members of the court, there were jewels galore.

If the gifted little fiddler found it necessary to convert them all into cash he could start a bank. But, most of all, he prizes a fine autographed photograph of England's Queen, in a heavy, silver frame. He keeps that on a table by his bed, and calls it his "beautiful lady."

He mentions the fact that the Queen frequently writes to him with such profound awe that you fancy he expects you to bow low. One New York critic says that Vecsey is a parrot. Others say that he is the wonder of the age.

Annie Russell's new play, "Brother Jacques," is said to set forth her fragile gift with comedy fitness. Her part is that of a willful girl. The play depicts the woes of a pair of voluble children whose parental guidance leads them to an unhappy marriage. But before the final curtain both meet their real affinity and a happy ending is provided. Miss Russell's leading men are Oswald York and Charles S. Abbe. Prominent in the company are Davenport Seymour (a name which awakens memories of Fanny Davenport and her energetic relative, Willie Seymour), Grant Stewart, May Hennessy and Elizabeth Churchill.

David Lewis, the Royal Chef at the Garrick, has the credit of the invention of the "sympathetic finale" of the first act of the new showpiece. It occurred to him that with almost a surfeit of modern operatic comedy in the lines, the introduction of a bit of pathos, genuinely portrayed, might not come amiss, and so he invented the ending of act one, where Lemphauser, learning that he cannot get away from the Rajah's domains, pleads with his entourage. He sings "Let me go back, let me go back to that dear old St. Louis town; I'll hire a hack, I'll walk the track," but the chorus, in a chant almost of Greek solemnity, decrees otherwise, and Lemphauser begins his long siege of scullery work in an Oriental kitchen far removed from the recipes of Mme. Rorer. Another member of the cast who has met with much local favor is William Bellery, the Lord Mito, Prime Minister, and later, by the easy graduation common to comic ventures, the chief of the Odessa bandits. Few observers have learned that Admiral Noble, U. S. N., and Basso, the bandit, are united in the person of Joseph Allen, who doubles here very mysteriously. An added feature is the singing by Joseph S. Welsh and Florence Holbrook, the Lieutenant and Princess Teto of the cast. Their

voices blend capably in the song, "What Color Eyes Do You Love Best?" Several St. Louis young ladies have joined the Royal Chef's "brother" contingent.

M. Jean Richépin's "Le Chemineau" is to be seen at the Century Theater next week in an English version presented by Otis Skinner under the title of "The Harvester." A special interest attaches to this particular work of the Parisian playwright, in view of the fact that it is said to be, in part, an autobiography of the famous poet-dramatist.

Richépin was born under the burning sun of Africa, at Medeah in Algeria, fifty-five years ago. The little Jean was the son of an army surgeon stationed in that French colony. While his father was later serving in the Crimea, his mother lived with the little Jean in Belleville, one of the suburbs of Paris frequented by beggars. The boy's early-awakened sympathies for outcasts developed as the years went on. Before Maxim Gorki attracted world-wide fame by his studies of the outcast population of Russia and by his own curious, nondescript career, Richépin had anticipated all these things in his own life and poems. Restless by instinct, leading the life of a roamer and fortune-seeker in every sort of queer occupation, he was by turns soldier, sailor before the mast and wanderer at the public fairs.

One day he accidentally met a strolling band of gypsies. It took little eloquence on his part to secure him as their champion-entertainer (song writer in chief). With them he journeyed from village to village. The daughter of the leader of the band fell in love with Richépin, who was, and still is, in spite of his 50 years, a handsome, athletic poet. She insisted upon having him for her bridegroom, and, according to gypsy custom, refusal would have meant death. He took to flight. This faraway episode in his actual gypsy experience furnished him with the key-note to the most dramatic situation of "The Harvester." In the play this curious event is set forth in the flight of the hero, Le Chemineau, from Toinette, his sweetheart.

When Otis Skinner visited Richépin at his villa in Farmoutiers, near Paris, last summer, the poet exhibited to the curious actor a faded little piece of ribbon tied in a gypsy love-knot. "This is my souvenir of my Roman heroine," remarked the poet to Mr. Skinner. "I keep it in remembrance of those days, and had it pinned to my desk while I was writing 'Le Chemineau.'"

The new Korean comic opera, "The Sho-Gun," by George Ade and Gustav Loebner, will come to the Olympic Theatre on Monday. The scenes are laid in an island near Korea. The opera is in two acts and the characters are all Korean with the exception of one William Henry Spangle, a shrewd American promoter from Iowa, who has penetrated that quarter of the globe in pursuit of money-making schemes and in a hunt for a title. The company includes John E. Henshaw, Edward R. Martindell, Tracie Frigman, Christie Macdonald, May Ten Brock and Grace King.

Jeannette Bageard disdains the flat slipper and the costume devoid of style which are affected by many dancers of equal proficiency. As Sidonie, the French maid, in "The Prince of Pilsen," she wears high heels and the trimmest of Parisian dresses.

Miss Bageard first attracted attention to herself while rehearsing in the chorus of one of the New York Casino productions. She chanced to be doing a few steps, and was singled out by the stage manager for a part in the main specialty of the piece. Later she went with the Rogers Brothers, and always figured in their famous "conversation" dances, executed by the two comedians with the assistance of two girls. This is her third season in "The Prince of Pilsen."

In view of the fact that William Gillette is now playing in "The Admirable Crichton" may seem paradoxical to state that this actor made his last "personal" appearance three years ago in Boston at the Hollis Street Theater. But the apparent paradox does not exist, in that Mr. Gillette sharply differentiates his "personal" and "professional" appearance.

At the close of his engagement in "Brother Jacques," Elizabeth Churchill and Claire Winston.

lock Holmes," at the Hollis Street Theater, Mr. Gillette responded to numerous calls for a speech with the following words:

"Although I have no intention of abandoning dramatic work at present, this is positively my last appearance personally before the curtain of a theater. While it is delightful to respond to the compliment of such a call, it is, I think, a great mistake for an actor to yield to the temptation, and I, for one, am going to discontinue it."

"I feel that in appearing before the curtain or outside of the scenes of the play I am shattering at one blow the illusion which not only myself but the entire company has been faithfully working to establish. The illusion or sense of actuality is at the very basis of effective modern drama, and it should not be subjected to so unnecessary a blow. For that reason I am bidding you, and through you, if you will allow me, the theater-going public, a very affectionate personal farewell, although I most sincerely hope to have the pleasure of again appearing before many audiences in the place to which my work assigns me."

A benefit which is always an enjoyable event of the German Theater season is that of Director George Heilmann, which takes place at the Olympic Theater to-night. Director Heilmann has so long and so successfully maintained the German drama in St. Louis that an evening set aside for him always meets with the approval of his patrons. For to-night he has chosen "Unser Doktor" ("Our Doctor"), which has been revamped and equipped with topical songs, dance music and pertinent lines that bring it up to date. Director Heilmann will assume the part of Lebrecht, the doting parent of a neurotic-will son, who studies medicine because his sire desires a doctor in the family. Twenty of the prettiest young girls of the Southwestern Turnverein have volunteered to take part in the ensemble scenes.

Joe Dandy, who plays Hans Wagner in "The Prince of Pilsen," trained himself for the stage as a story-telling traveling salesman and as an entertainer in political meetings. He found that a story helped him to sell goods, and his aptitude increased with his sales. After he had become one of the best-known drummers on the road he became interested in politics. With the overthrow of the Strong administration in New York he began to think of story-telling as an occupation. His first engagement was in vaudeville.

It is announced that early next June Raymond Hitchcock and Flora Zabelle are to be married in Paris. Miss Zabelle was the leading lady of "The Yankee Consul" until about six weeks ago, when she resigned and joined her mother in the French capital.

Rejane is accompanied on her American tour by her daughter, Germaine Porel Rejane, an exceedingly clever young girl, who is opposed to the stage. She was educated in an English convent. As the great French actress is unable to speak a word of English, Rejane acts as the interpreter for her mother.

In the last act of "The Rogers Brothers in Paris" all the characters go to the St. Louis Exposition, and as a result the pretty girls don picturesque attire like many of the exhibitors who won popularity on the Pike.

CURRENT ENGAGEMENTS AT ST. LOUIS THEATERS.
 Annie Russell will be seen at the Olympic Monday evening in "Brother Jacques," a new comedy adapted from the French. The first appearance of Miss Russell in a new play is always an event of much interest. "Brother Jacques" is said to provide her with an excellent part. The piece comes to St. Louis with the endorsement of a successful run in New York and in Chicago. In Miss Russell's support are Charles S. Abbe, Oswald York, George W. Wilson, Grant Stewart, Ira Hanks, William Wray, Sidney Mansfield, Louis Carter, Mrs. Charles H. Watson, Elizabeth Johnson, Davenport Seymour, Tracie Frigman, and

Joseph Santley, hero of "From Rags to Riches" at Havlin's.

achieving great success in vaudeville this season. A sketch entitled "Daddy and the Diamond" will be presented by Eddie Girard and Jennie Gardner. Girard has, of course, the character of an Irish policeman, the part in which he first won his reputation. The play is new and is said to be very funny. The Four Madones promise some skillful, daring and graceful acrobatic dancing. Other performers are Horan and Novaro, in "Weary Wangles, the Dandy Dude Tramp"; the Four Hummings, in a farce, Ollie Young and Brother, hoop rollers; Louise Brennan, soprano; Cliff Dean and company; Hedra and Prescott, novelty dancers; Lottie West Symonds, Leo Carrillo, mimic of animals; Fred and May Waddell, singers, dancers and club jumpers.

The versatility of the Odessa Stock Company members will be evident this week when they appear in William Gillette's comedy, "All the Comforts of Home." It will be a long stop from the serious work of presenting "Romeo and Juliet," "Camille" and "In the Palace of the King" to this laugh-provoking play, but the Odessa players are individually and collectively elated over the opportunity to tickle the risibilities of their friends. Every member of the company has appeared in "All the Comforts of Home."

Lottie Williams will return to the Imperial in "Only a Shop Girl." Miss Williams is again to appear as Josie, the clever young woman who is the center of the chief situations. This is to be Miss Williams' last season in the comedy, and an interesting performance is promised. The present cast includes Henrietta Tatro, Margaret Brownlee, Maude Kellet, May



JOSEPH SANTLEY, HERO OF "FROM RAGS TO RICHES" AT HAVLIN'S

MAY CUREY STANDARD

EVELYN WAUGHAN, WHO WILL PLAY A LEADING PART IN "ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME" AT THE ODEON

Woods, Nellie Bernard, A. L. Lester, William J. Woods and a large chorus.

"The Prince of Pilsen" is to be presented at the Century to-night. Joe Dandy will again appear as Hans Wagner, the funny "Cincinnati brewer." Miss Ada Stanhope will be the widow, Arthur Tynan, the German Prince, and Marie Walsh the brewer's daughter, Nellie.

"From Rags to Riches" a new melodrama, will be the attraction at Havlin's Theater. The chief characters are two children, a boy and a girl, who are adopted by a poor Irish woman. Their father is sent to the Penitentiary for a crime of which he was innocent. The mother becomes a trained nurse. The villain who broke up the once happy home seeks to obtain possession of the unfortunate couple's daughter and is presented only by the showiness of her little brother. Joseph Santley will play Ned Simkins, the young hero. Master Santley formerly played a child's part in the support of Maude Adams.

William Russell is to appear at the Crawford in his last season's success, "An American Gentleman." The comedy is built up about the abduction of a girl. The episode keeps her in ignorance of her identity. Russell, as a young scion of fortune, discovers her and restores the young woman to her family. Miss Garcia Pitchea is to be seen as the heroine.

The "World Masters" will entertain at the Standard. Two new extravaganzas are promised, "The Ping Pong King" and "One Night Out." The idea is to include specialties by the Three Nubes, aerialists, Alexia and Schall in their characteristic of the subterfuge and the acrobatic, domination and drama in a novel scenic act; Joseph and Russell, Maude Carter, Nuala, the Billigan comedian, May Gelhardt and Cissie Grant.

Pupils of the Lichtenstein Violin School will give a recital at the Odessa January 22. The programme has been arranged as follows:

March.....Volin Quartet.....Alton
 Blues.....Bella of Scotland.....Harris
 Frederic.....Frederic.....Harris
 Melodies from Lullaby of the Regiment.....Donizetti
 Melodies from Stradella.....Flow
 Air and Variation.....Wendy-Daniel
 The Girl in the Park.....FAIR II.
 Cello Song.....Miss Hart.....Edward
 Hearts and Flowers.....Robert
 Hungarian Rhapsody.....Hans
 La Melancolie.....San Kipp.....Prune
 Russian Air.....Wienawski
 Serenade.....Schubert-Romani
 Finale from Concerto.....Mendelssohn
 Jacob Humberg.

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